



United States Army

Criminal Investigation Command

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DNA Examiner Suspended at Army's Criminal Investigation Laboratory CID Commander Orders Independent Reviews

FORT BELVOIR, Va., August 26, 2005 – The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID, announced today they've initiated an official inquiry into allegations that a civilian forensic DNA lab examiner at the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory (USACIL) at Fort Gillem, Ga., may have falsified official documents involving test control processes.

On June 2, 2005, the examiner admitted to making a false entry on a control sample used during a DNA examination. The falsified entry was detected during a mandatory quality control review. The false entry made the DNA test invalid.

Previously, the examiner was suspended from DNA case work in January 2004 when contamination was detected in his testing process. After remedial action and retraining, he was returned to casework in September 2004 working individual cases with supervision. However, he was subsequently suspended from DNA casework in May of this year after allegations of the false entry surfaced. At that time, USACIL initiated a preliminary inquiry into the allegations. That preliminary inquiry led to the current inquiry underway by the CID Standards of Conduct Office.

The CID is seeking assistance of independent agencies to conduct a review of testing procedures to ensure the incident is isolated to one employee and does not involve any systemic problems.

Additionally, CID has requested the DoD Inspector General's Office conduct an independent review of the ongoing CID inquiry, once completed.

"We obviously take this situation very seriously as demonstrated by the actions ordered by the command," said Chris Grey, spokesman for CID. "We are taking every step necessary to ensure we have an independent, impartial review of the issues at hand. At this time, the incident appears to be isolated to one individual examiner, but we want to take every step necessary to be make certain that is the case."

The Standards of Conduct Office at CID is leading the inquiry into the allegations. The DNA examiner, a government service employee, has been suspended from duties pending the outcome of the inquiry. It has been determined that none of the DNA test results from the identified case above that initially triggered the inquiry, left the lab before being retested.

The crime laboratory has been directed to conduct a review of all cases the accused DNA examiner has processed since 1995, the year when he first began processing DNA cases at the Army lab. The review will include cases pending trial and cases that resulted in a conviction. Concurrently, the USACIL has sent a notification letter to all uniformed service Staff Judge Advocates to advise them of the identified deficiencies and the corrective actions taking place. CID is also alerting all DoD criminal investigative organizations so that affected evidence custodians can preserve evidence in all cases where the identified individual examined evidence. To date, this examiner has been identified as having worked at least 479 cases.

The Army's Crime Lab provides forensic laboratory services to all DoD investigative agencies and is the only accredited full-service crime lab in the Federal Government other than the FBI's lab. USACIL has been accredited by the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors since 1985 and was re-accredited in 2001.

To maintain accreditation of a DNA operation, the lab has to undergo an external review/audit a minimum of once every two years, according to the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors. The CID lab exceeds that requirement and has an external audit of the DNA unit annually. The last external DNA audit was performed in October 2004.

The lab provides forensic examinations in Drug Chemistry, Trace Evidence, Serology/DNA, Latent Prints, Questioned Documents, Imaging and Technical Services, Firearms and Toolmarks.

Names of individuals involved in the probe are not being released at this time. More information will be released as it becomes available.

Historically, the USACIL system included a laboratory in North Africa, then Europe (1943-96), in Japan (1948-93) and in the United States (1945-Present). With one remaining laboratory, the USACIL now provides worldwide forensics support from its current location at Fort Gillem, Georgia.

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